

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00125 271453Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02

MCT-01 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-07 /073 W

-----280118Z 068097 /71

R 271400Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5658

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SF, PINT

SUBJ: PARLIAMENT: THE NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE

1. AS IN TRADITIONAL IN SOUTH AFRICA, SIR DE VILLERS GRAAFF, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, OPENED FIRST WORKING DAY OF PARLIAMENT ON JANUARY 24 BY INTRODUCING MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT. GRAAF, STILL AN IMPRESSIVE DEBATOR, MADE POINT THAT APARTHEID HAD FAILED SOUTH AFRICA INTERNALLY, EXTERNALLY, AND ECONOMICALLY, AND CALLED ON GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE ITS WAYS. HE ALSO STRUCK WHAT HAS BBFOME COMMON THEME: NEED FOR "NEW DISPENSATION" AND NEW DIRECTION FOR S.A.

2. NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE, WHICH WILL LAST ENTIRE WEEK, GIVES ALL MP'S OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK ON VIRTUALLY ANY SUBJECT. OTHER SPEAKERS JANUARY 24 INCLUDED THREE CABINET MEMBERS: P.W. BOTHA (DEFENCE), S.P. BOTHA (LABOR), AND MARAIS STEYN (INDIAN AFFAIRS), WHO AVOIDED ANY DIRECT RESPONSE TO GRAAFF'S SPECIFIC CRITICISMS, AND WHO ATTEMPTED TO EXPLOIT DIVISION IN OPPOSITION RANKS. NONE OF MINISTERS GAVE ANY INDICA-

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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00125 271453Z

TION OF ANY CONTEMPLATED SAG CHANGES IN POLICY DIRECTION. ALSO SPEAKING WAS PROGRESSIVE REFORM PARTY LEADER COLIN EGLIN, WHO CALLED FOR FULL CITIZENSHIP FOR COLOREDS, AND FOR TURNHALLE-TYPE CONFERENCE FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

3. DEBATE CONTINUED JANUARY 25 WITH INFORMATION MINISTER CONNIE MULDER ADMITTING THAT "WE ARE LIVING IN SERIOUS TIMES"

BUT DECLARING THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD NOT COMMIT "NATIONAL SUICIDE". YBURGY STREICHER, SPEAKING FOR NEW "INDEPENDENT UNITED PARTY" (IUP) EXPLAINED THAT IUP WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ORIGINAL UP PLATFORM AND NOT MARAIS COMMITTEE 14 PRINCIPLES. STREICHER DENIED REPORTS HE WOULD WORK CLOSELY WITH PRIME MINISTER, SAYING HE HAD BEEN ELECTED TO OPPOSITION AND WOULD CONTINUE TO OPPOSE NP. IMPLICATION WAS, HOWEVER, THAT IUP WOULD BE CLOSER TO NP THAN WOULD UP.

4. ACRIMONY REACHED HIGHEST POINT IN DEBATE BETWEEN HELEN SUZMAN (PRP) AND MINISTER OF POLICE JIMMY KRUGER. SUZMAN, SPEAKING TO HALF-EMPTY CHAMBER (TWO-THIRDS OF NATIONAL PARTY MEMBERS WALKED OUT IN FIRST MINUTES OF HER SPEECH) DELIVERED SCATHING ATTACK ON POLICE HANDLING OF RIOTS. SHE AT ONE POINT REFERRED TO KRUGER'S "SMALL BRAIN", BUT APOLOGIZED BEFORE BEING CALLED UPON TO RETRACT. KRUGER, IN REPLY, DISPLAYED CAPTURED "TERRORIST WEAPONS" AND AMMUNITION, CLAIMED THAT 65 TRAINED TERRORISTS HAD BEEN RECENTLY ARRESTED, AND STATED THAT URBAN TERRORISM IS "TOTALLY FINISHED" IN SOUTH AFRICA (PRETORIA SEPTEL). HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT MASSIVE PROTEST MARCH AND DISTURBANCE PLANNED FOR SOWETO ON JANUARY 26. (THE MARCH DID NOT MATERIALIZE AND JOURNALISTS REPORTED THEY COULD LOCATE NO ONE IN SOWETO OR ELSEWHERE WITH KNOWLEDGE OF ANY PLANS FOR SUCH A DEMONSTRATION.)

5. THE JANUARY 26 CONTINUATION OF DEBATE WAS MUCH THE SAME. PRP NATIONAL EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN SWARTZ ASSERTED VORSTER HAD THE KEY TO THE COUNTRY'S FUTURE BUT WAS PLACING AFRIKANER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 CAPE T 00125 271453Z

NATIONALIST UNITY ABOVE WHITE SURVIVAL. HE URGED DISMISSAL OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION MINISTER BOTHA AS A DANGER TO RACE RELATIONS. THE LATTER CONCENTRATED HIS REMARKS ON THE MARAIS COMMITTEE 14 POINTS, CALLING THEM DANGEROUS PRINCIPLES IN THE HANDS OF DANGEROUS PEOPLE. UP FINANCIAL SPOKESMAN BAXTER BLAMED THREE YEARS OF DOUBLE-DIGIT INFLATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S "SLAVISH" PURSUIT OF APARTHEID. IUP WHIP HICKMAN DECLARED HIS PARTY WOULD ALWAYS BE FOUND ON THE SIDE OF LAW AND ORDER BUT THE COUNTRY COULD NOT CONTINUE WITH RACE RELATIONS AS THEY ARE NOW.

6. LEGISLATION - SEVERAL BILLS HAVE ALREADY BEEN INTRODUCED TO PARLIAMENT. OF SOME INTEREST IS NEW "CIVIL PROTECTION BILL" GIVING DEFENCE MINISTER PTEE POWER TO DECLARE

3-MONTH STATE OF EMERGENCY IN ANY AREA IN CASE OF RIOTS OR DISASTER AND ENABLING PROVINCIAL COUNCILS TO MAKE ORDINANCES TO PROTECT PERSONS AND PROPERTY AND COMBAT CIVIL DISRUPTION. UP SAID IT WILL SUPPORT THE BILL, AND PRP SPOKESMAN SAID HE

WOULD RECOMMEND IT "IN PRINCIPLE" TO HIS CAUCUS. A MORE
CONTROVERSIAL BILL WILL BE AN INDEMNITY BILL PROTECTING
STATE AND ITS AGENTS AGAINST CIVIL OR CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS ON
ANY ACT DONE IN "GOOD FAITH" AFTER JUNE 16, 1976 TO PREVENT
OR SUPPRESS CIVIL DISORDER. BILL SPECIFICALLY PROVIDES THAT
IN ANY PROCEEDING, GOOD FAITH WILL BE PRESUMED UNLESS PROVED
OTHERWISE. THIS WILL ALSO APPLY IN RESPECT OF "ANY DEFAULT"...
IN COMPLYING WITH ANY PROVISION OF A LAW OR REGULATION".
"CAPE TIMES" HAS ATTACKED BILL ARGUING THAT IT IS A LICENSE
TO THE POLICE TO ACT UNLAWFULLY, EVEN WITH TACIT ENCOURAGEMENT
OF THE GOVERNMENT. PAPER SAYS IN VIEW PERSISTENT ALLEGATIONS
OF POLICE MISCONDUCT (BEING REPORTED SEPTEL), QUESTION SHOULD
BE LEFT FOR THE COURTS. ALSO CONTROVERSIAL WILL BE REINTRODUC-
TION BY JUSTICE MINISTER KRUGER OF HIS BILL TO BAN SUNDAY
FILM CLUBS (GENERAL COMMERCIAL FILM SCREENINGS ARE ALREADY
BANNED ON SUNDAY). KRUGER ALSO ATTRACTED ATTENTION WITH
HIS RECENT STATEMENT TO PRESS THAT HE WAS "CONSIDERING"
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LEGISLATION TO CURB PRESS REPORTING ON POLICE ACTIONS SIMILAR
TO EXISTING REGULATIONS RESTRICTING REPORTING OF TROOP
MOVEMENTS. IN NOT VERY SUBTLE THREAT, HE REPORTEDLY
ADDED THAT WHETHER IT WAS INTRODUCED WOULD DEPEND ON HOW
NEWSPAPER PRESS UNION "GOT ON" WITH PRIME MINISTER IN
DRAWING UP A NEW PRESS CODE.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3488882
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PARLIAMENT: THE NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e2cc38d0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009